

# OBITUARIES

---

*Tourism* 2015, 25/2

---

## PROFESSOR RYSZARD GAŁECKI 1929–2015



Professor Ryszard Gałęcki has passed away. He was born on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1929, in Toruń and before the Second World War he attended a primary school affiliated to the Pedagogium in Toruń, then during the war at a *Grundschule* in Gródek which he left in 1942 moving on to a 'School of Commerce' in Grudziądz until 1944. At the same time (1940-44) he was attending underground classes covering the material of Polish elementary and secondary schools. After the war, in 1946-49, he attended a Poznań 'Commercial Liceum', and from 1949-54 he studied at *Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczna* (Higher School of Economics) in Poznań, graduating with a master's degree.

He spent his whole professional life in an academic environment. He began work at the Higher School of Economics on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1954 (renamed first *Akademia Ekonomiczna* – Academy of Economics and later *Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Poznaniu* – Poznań University of Economics). He obtained a PhD in 1962 for his work *Kierunki rozwoju rynku produktów rolnych województwa opolskiego* (Directions in the development of the agricultural produce market in Opole Voivode-

ship). The supervisor of this work was Prof. Zbigniew Zakrzewski – the director of *Instytut Handlu Wewnętrznego i Usług* ('Institute of Domestic Trade and Services') at the *Wyższa Szkoła Ekonomiczna*. The work was published by *Instytut Śląski* in Opole, in 1964. Until 1969, Ryszard Gałęcki dealt with problems of trade: he was a co-author of *Ekonomika handlu* (The Economics of Trade – published by PWN in 1964), and *Handel wewnętrzny Republiki Federalnej Niemiec* (Domestic Trade in the Federal Republic of Germany – published in 1965 by *Instytut Zachodni* in Poznań).

In 1967, students attending Prof. Zakrzewski's seminars formed a group to write their MA theses on tourism. Dr (*Docent*) Gałęcki took the responsibility for supervising those works. From that moment, he became interested in the economic issues of tourism. His first works on this topic were on the relationship between tourism and commerce resulting in an article entitled *Rozwój ruchu turystycznego a działalność handlu* (The development of tourism as a trading activity) published in *Problemy Ekonomiczne Turystyki* (Economic Issues of Tourism) in 1969. In 1972 Gałęcki and

Rogoziński wrote an article entitled *Rola turystyki w aktywizacji małych miast i wsi* (The role of tourism in activating small towns and villages), published in *Ossolineum*. Gałęcki's academic work gained impetus and he published four further articles in the same year.

In the academic world, the most effective and creative stance is that which combines one's own creative personality with work for a cause. For Prof. Gałęcki, this cause was to create and develop the Poznań and Wielkopolska academic environment in terms of tourism issues. It required enormous effort to create the institutional basis and an appropriate staff to achieve the goal set.

Professor Gałęcki undertook this great challenge. A significant milestone was the establishing of *Katedra Turystyki* at the Higher School of Economics in Poznań, in 1973. He was its head for 26 years; at that time, it was only the second research centre of its type in Poland. Nowadays, it is employing a third generation of researchers. Two years later, he co-founded *Wydział Turystyki i Rekreacji* (Tourism and Recreation Department) at *Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego* (Academy of Physical Education) in Poznań which became a renowned research and teaching establishment, qualifying thousands of students as tourism professionals. In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, as the head of the Tourism Faculty, he involved Polish research internationally by participating in the so-called 'Vienna Research' and the pre-EU accession 'Tempus' programme. Before the socio-economic transformation in Poland, he had co-authored books such as *Ekonomika turystyki* (Tourism Economics) (AE Poznań 1980), *Ekonomika przedsiębiorstw turystycznych* (The Economics of Tourism Enterprises) (AE Poznań 1984), *Turystyka we Województwo poznańskie* (Tourism in Poznań Voivodeship) (PTPN Poznań, 1986). He was also the author of *Przesłanki rozwoju hotelarstwa w Polsce* (Principles for the development of the hotel industry in Poland) (CPBP, *Instytut Turystyki* 1989). The material presented in these books is mostly still up to date.

On 5<sup>th</sup> July 1990, Ryszard Gałęcki was awarded his habilitation in the field of tourism economics as a result of his entire body of academic work, approved by the Central Commission for Academic Titles and Degrees in May 1991. On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1991, Ryszard Gałęcki was appointed 'Associate Professor' of the Academy of Economics in Poznań and retained this position until his retirement in 1999. He is the author of 21 monographs and 69 articles. Among the latter, we should mention the following:

- *Economic issues of service supply in social tourism* (XXVII Aiest Congress, Warsaw 1977),
- *The economic effectiveness of tourism services as precondition of the social effectiveness of tourism* (Strbske Pleso 1986),
- *Recent changes in education in the field of tourism and hotel management* (in *Proceedings of the conference on college education in tourism and hospitality*, Budapest 1994),
- *Tendencje zmian w potencjale usług noclegowych na polskim wybrzeżu Bałtyku* (Trends in hotel service potential on the Polish Baltic coast) in *Aktualne problemy gospodarki turystycznej*/Current problems in the tourism economy (AE University Publishing in Poznań, 1996).

For many years, Prof. Gałęcki held a number of responsible positions at the university. In 1972-75 he was the vice-dean of *Wydział Handlowo-Towaroznawczego* at the Higher School of Economics in Poznań, and from 1972-91 – the deputy director of *Instytut Ekonomiki Handlu Wewnętrznego i Usług*. He was a member of many public organizations such as *Polskie Towarzystwo Ekonomiczne* (Polish Economics Society – from 1954), the *Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego* (Polish Teachers' Union – from 1954), the *Polskie Towarzystwo Turystyczno-Krajoznawcze* (Polish Tourism Association – from 1950), and *Towarzystwo Miłośników m. Poznania* ('Lovers of Poznań' Association – from 1966). He was a renowned expert. In the 1990s, he was appointed by the Chairman of the Physical Culture and Tourism Office as a member of the team preparing an bill on tourism services. He also took part in the work of the *Kongres Nauki Polskiej* (Congress of Polish Studies) academic committee and was a member of the 'Collegium of Experts' for the 'Poland Now' competition.

Prof. Ryszard Gałęcki was ahead of his times. At the beginning of the 1990s, at the Academy of Economics in Poznań, he organized the first bachelor degree studies at a state university (*Wyższa Szkoła Turystyki i Hotelarstwa* – Higher School of Tourism and Hotel Management). At that time, this idea had many opponents, but several years later, when Poland joined the European Union, the two-stage system of study became obligatory for the whole of higher education in Poland.

Prof. Gałęcki highly respected students and young academics enabling them to pursue their own research interests which is why he had so many disciples. Four of his postgraduate students have become professors of economics (G. Golembski, K. Rogoziński, S. Bosiacki and A. Niezgoda). He supervised 15 PhDs, 445 MA and BA theses, 309 of which concerned tourism economics. He built the foundation for new generations to enter the international academic world. The youngest had no chance to meet the professor and probably are not even aware of who made it possible for them to develop their careers. This brings a very wise parable about talents to mind: the Lord has most respect for those who know how to multiply the talents they have been given. And who does it better

than the one thanks to whom subsequent generations can benefit.

Prof. Gałęcki's work was appreciated by many. He received numerous awards and distinctions; one which is certainly worth mentioning is the award for significant and creative academic achievements in educating tourism professionals, presented to him in 1990 by the *Komitet ds. Młodzieży i Kultury Fizycznej*. Other awards included the highest prize of the Physical Culture and Tourism Office for particularly important achievements in the development of tourism, which he received in 1992, and the National Education Commission medal awarded in 1999.

He was also a representative of the passing generation of those who were able and wanted to combine their love of tackling tourism research issues with being a genuine tourist. He loved to wander, was

a dedicated and sensitive lover of travel, knew the geography of Poland and loved his country as only a 'tourist-wanderer' can. During his work at the University of Economics in Poznań he initiated many trips for university staff which are still remembered, e.g. a trip to the Tatra Mountains (Terchova 1998) or an exquisite excursion to Saxon Switzerland and Dresden (1999).

I had the honour and was fortunate to be the first doctor of economics promoted by Prof. Ryszard Gałęcki. I also have the honour of being his first and so far the only successor to the position of *Kierownik Katedry Turystyki* at the University of Economics in Poznań. Therefore, I will take the liberty of bidding him farewell, hoping to meet him again on some mysterious and unknown heavenly trail.

**Grzegorz Gołębski**

Head of Department of Tourism  
Poznań University of Economics

*Translated by Ewa Mossakowska*